

Uplift Michigan Online School  
Board of Education Regular Board Meeting  
Thursday, March 23, 2023  
6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

4451 Hunsberger Ave NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

1. Board meeting called to order at by Paul Marineau at 6:04pm

Roll Call

- Board Members present: Soraida Cunningham, Mary Harwood, Paul Marineau, Brian Wood
- Board Members Absent: Arturo Armijo
- Call-in: Susanne Carpenter, Mike Colassanti, Michael Frederick, Robert Giordano, Lori LaMontagne, Tonya Lowry, Ashley Shehow, Aaron Walth, Tim Wood
- In person: Travis Gostinger

2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Statement of Purpose
4. Regular Business

- a. Adoption of Agenda

- i. Motion to adopt the agenda by Mary Harwood seconded by Brian Wood, all members – aye, motion carried

- b. Public Comment

- i. None

- c. Correspondence

- i. None

- d. Approval of Minutes

- i. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from the September board meeting by Brian Wood, seconded by Soraida Cunningham, all members – aye, motion carried

5. Financial Reports

- a. Motion to approve financial report as presented by Brian Wood, seconded by Paul Marineau, all members – aye, motion carried

6. Leadership Update

- a. Management update

- i. Formation and Operational Background

1. Created a board portal that all members will have access to and will continue to grow as we move forward. Houses important documents.

- ii. Enrollment and Marketing Report Out

1. Presentation by Mike Colasanti (SYNERGii Media) worked with us to create branding and helped us purchase the marketing that was most efficient for us. (attached powerpoint)
2. Presentation by Aaron Walth (Grand Canyon Education) does social media for Uplift. Oversees lead generation. (attached powerpoint)

iii. Legislative Updates

1. Presentation by Michael Frederick (lobbyist representative for Charter Schools including Uplift)
2. Governor Whitmer proposed 20% reduction in funding for cyber schools only. This has happened before but was rejected by republicans. Uplift has joined a coalition of other cyber charter schools in the state to approach the issue jointly. Efforts are ongoing. The House and Senate return mid-April and will release first versions of the budget out of the subcommittee. The cut is expected to stay in budget within the subcommittee but continuing to work on the legislators. Identified legislators and have been communicating with them. 'Forgiven time' says cyber schools are not eligible.

iv. K-12 overview

b. Academic update

- i. 2023/24 Calendar for approval – Polled students, staff, and Learning Coaches to see if they prefer to start before or after Labor Day. Most prefer the traditional after Labor Day start.
  1. Motion to approve the calendar for 23/24 School Year by Paul Marineau, seconded by Brian Wood, all members – aye, motion carried
- ii. State testing starts after Spring Break. Required to hit 95% participation grades 3-11. Done in person at approved sites throughout the state. Last year we had 88%. Confirmed for 65% already.
- iii. Graduation rate is currently 59%. Last year was 54%. Hoping to raise by 4% each year.
- iv. Superintendent Lowery and Tim Wood attended Stephenson board meeting, had a good conversation, they didn't have many questions but did have questions about graduation rate.

7. Board Strategy and Planning

a. Board Stipends

- i. All set to go based on what was approved in December by the board. Got clarification from the board legal counsel and auditor that we are able to go through with planned, not as payroll.

8. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn at 7:23 pm by Brian Wood, seconded by Mary Harwood, all members – aye, motion carried

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Harwood, Board Secretary